

# Adult Literacy and Lifeskills

## Background Questionnaire Meeting

March 27-29, 2000

Ottawa, Canada

Below is a chart summarizing the suggestions made at the meeting for revising the ALL Background Questionnaire.

Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
SECTION A - General Information						
Contact Information						
date of birth/age			needs to be formulated as a question so that it can be included in a module if necessary			
gender			needs to be formulated as a question so it can be included in a module if necessary			
marital status						X
dependent children and age of youngest child			needs to be formulated as a question so it can be included in a module if necessary			
language of interview						X
rural/urban						X
dwelling owned or rented						X
relationship to head of household - to be replaced by household composition			household composition to be defined as the number of adults living in the household - NOTE may be possible to revise the question on household composition in the income module			

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		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
New- add a question on responsibility for dependent children			concept needs to be defined and the question needs to be formulated			
A1		X				
A2			cut the skip to question A4			
A3		X				
A4			consider adding further explanation in the question, definition of formal education may not be clear BUT any change to the question will alter its comparability to IALS data; this question must be a focus in testing			
A5		X (must be made nationally specific)				
New- add a question about age of completion of highest level of schooling			new question to be formulated			
A6				X (to be made nationally specific)		

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		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
A7					reconsider reference period, change neither agree nor disagree to no opinion or find a better mid-point on the scale, consider if the question could be moved to module G if reference period changes; make sure that the level of education used as a reference point is clear	
A8					question to be re-worked - to be specific that the concept is problems diagnosed in the school system	

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A9					re-work the question - potentially to reflect when the problems were first diagnosed	
SECTION B - language						
B1			wording of B1 must be examined - are respondents able to respond to “still understand” at the end of this question; each country can consider the ordering of the response categories			
B2		X (response categories to be ordered as nationally appropriate and ranked nationally)				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
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New - proposed creation of an internationally optional language module					international optional language module to be developed (consider addition of question on the knowledge of languages other than official language for example)	various countries such as Canada may still require specific language questions that would be national options
SECTION C - Parental Information						
C1 and C8			needs a response category of "questions not applicable"			
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
C2 and C9			collapse the required coding to ISCED levels 1 and 2; ISCED 3 and 4; and ISCED 5A,5B, 6 ; add a category for no formal schooling; countries will be responsible for the development of nationally appropriate questions that lead to the required ISCED categories			

C4, C5, C6,C7 and C10, C11, C12,C13			to be replaced by one question regarding the occupation of the parent(s) using a nationally appropriate pre-coded, fixed response category approach - a very crude measure of occupational status - 1 digit ISCO coding required only; this question will be subject to cutting if the questionnaire length is not acceptable			
<b>SECTION D</b> Labour Force Activity						
D1		X				
D2		X				
D3		X				
D4		X				
D5		X				
D6		X				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
D7		X				
D8		X				
D9		X				
D10		X				
D11		X				

D12		X				
D13		X (translation of look for work must be specified)				
D14		X				
D15	X					
D16-18		X (note that the main job is defined as the one at which the respondent worked the most hours in the last 12 months)				
D19		X				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
D20		X				
D21-24			Occupation must be coded to the 4 digit ISCO level. Countries may use whatever questioning structure is appropriate nationally to arrive at this level. Industry must be coded to the 2 digit ISIC level and again countries may use whatever questioning that is nationally appropriate to reach this level of coding.			

D25		X				
D26		X				
D27		X				
D28		X				
D29			reconsider response categories so they correspond with Eurostat categories			
D30		X				
D31			a third category for those whose status is “permanent - temporary” must be considered. These are people who work the same months of the year every year repeatedly (eg. Jan - June every year)			
D32			make sure the question includes “time off for vacation, illness, maternity/paternity leave, strikes and lockouts.			
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
D33			make sure the question includes “time off for vacation, illness, maternity/paternity leave, strikes and lockouts.			
D34		X				
D35		X				
D36	X					
D37	X					

D38		X				
D39		X				
D40		X				
D41		X				
D42		X				
D43		X				
SECTION E - Literacy and Numeracy Practices at Work						
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
E1A			final category should be NEVER - but consider if this will make respondents more likely to reply less than once a week ; make sure that respondent is informed that reading off the computer screen counts as well; the links to ICTL must be considered for the entire module; reconsider the population we want to ask these questions to (ie. just the currently employed); reconsider the reference period (ie. last week, yesterday etc.); if reference period is changed consider if time spent in activities can be asked			
E1B-E1E	X					

E2	Consider if this item can be cut					
E3			item g - analyse data is under construction			
E4	X					
E5			consider the social desirability effects of the existing question wording, consult the wording on the original E10 for an example of wording			
E6	X					
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
E7			consider the social desirability effects of the existing question wording, consult the wording on the original E10 for an example of wording; is what is meant by “writing” clear			
E8	X					
E9			consider the social desirability effects of the existing question wording, consult the wording on the original E10 for an example of wording			
E10			consider replacing category neither agree nor disagree with a no opinion option or a better mid-point category; is there another possible wording for this question such as “how often do you feel the need for better skills?” with different response categories such as “every day” and so forth; social desirability effects must be considered in any re-wording of the question			

<b>SECTION F -</b> Participation in Education and Learning NOTE: the comments here are based on the work of the PEL subgroup formed at the meeting						
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
F1	X - replace with a new question flow from F9 - to minimize the number of people who have to go through the student path - F9 will become the					

	screening question followed by F10 (program participation)					
F2		X				
F3		X				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
F4		X				
F5	X					
F6	X - not needed with new question flow path					
F7		X				
F8		X				
F9			this question will be the opening question in a revised module to maintain comparability to IALS and to minimize respondent burden; those who respond "NO" will now be sent to the section on informal learning			
F10		X				

F11			response categories need to be nationally specific but capable of being recoded to a collapsed ISCED97 version to be agreed upon			
F12		X				
F13		X				
NEW question			a new question to be added following F13 that will link the skills learned in the program to the cognitive skill areas that we are testing			
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
F14-15			financial sponsorship must be reconsidered to ensure that the questions are gathering the data required - a question on providers may be necessary to add to these two questions to make clear the role of the employer			
F16		X				
F17		X				
F18		X				
F19			omit "per week"			
F20		X				
F21		X				
F22		X				
F23A			respondents will answer volume questions on one program and a maximum of two courses or on three courses but other questions such as			

			reasons for taking the training will be asked of one program and one course only (the course of the greatest duration during the last 12 months)			
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
F23B			respondents will answer volume questions on one program and a maximum of two courses or on three courses but other questions such as reasons for taking the training will be asked of one program and one course only (the course of the greatest duration during the last 12 months)			
F24	X					
F25		X				
F26		X				
NEW Question			a new question to be added following F26 that will link the skills learned in the program to the cognitive skill areas that we are testing			
F27-28			financial sponsorship must be reconsidered to ensure that the questions are gathering the data required - a question on providers may be necessary to add to these two questions to make clear the role of the employer			
F29-F33		X				
F34			category 8 will have to be tested to see if everyone responds yes to this			
F35		X				

Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
F36			category 7 to be changed to course not available; consider adding a category “bad experiences with previous courses”			
F37		X				
F38			category 7 to be changed to course not available; consider adding a category “bad experiences with previous courses” and “don’t know what courses are available”			
F39			needs to be tested; a detailed reexamination of the question will be undertaken			
NEW Question - Providers						If education and training Providers are not added to the above questions this will be a national option
SECTION G - Literacy and Numeracy Practices Generally						

Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
G1			items c) and d) do not belong in this question; reconsider the item list so as to add such things as reading at the library; consider the links to ICTL here and this applies to the entire module; consider the response categories			
G2			more differentiation needed at the lower end of the response scale; consider the reference period			
G3			the reference period needs to be rethought; the time response categories need to be re-worked as well; can we ask for minutes			
G4	X					
G5	X					
G6		X				
G7			item list will be reduced and only those items that had analytical value in the IALS will be included			
G8	X					
NEW Question			need a question on the number of books available in the home			
G9	X					
G10	X					

Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
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G11			consider the social desirability effects of the existing wording and consult G13 as an example			
G12	X					
G13			item b) seems to be rather specific - feedback this information to the numeracy group			
SECTION H - Social Capital			this entire section is to be re-worked; a social capital group has been formed and will look at ways of expanding the module; the key concepts of social capital will first be defined and then we will attempt to operationalize these concepts			
SECTION J- Well-being						
J1- J7		X				
J8-J10						X
J11		X				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
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NEW questions					the module was felt to be too health	

					oriented and it was decided that the quality of life in the various dimensions of life (work, education) would be added as an international option	
SECTION K - Income						
K1 -K3		X (national items to be used as sources of income- consider if the income items should be placed in a module given after the tests)				
Question	Rejected	Internationally Required		Internationally Optional		National Option
		Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	Accepted as is	Accepted with modifications	
K3A, K5		X				